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EPA Mid-Atlantic Region Headlines

Tuesday, April 14, 2014

***** DAILY HOT LIST *****

Va. stands with Chesapeake Bay restoration plan

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Friday) RICHMOND — Virginia is defending the multistate plan to restore the environmentally battered Chesapeake Bay, arguing in a court filing that the state's interest in the nation's largest estuary is "incalculably great." Attorney General Mark R. Herring announced Thursday that the state has filed a friend-of-the court brief in support of the plan, which aims to restore the bay after decades of neglect and broken promises. The filing is in the 3rd U.S. Circuit of Appeals in Philadelphia, which is considering an appeal by farm industry groups of a ruling upholding the plan. They have been joined by attorneys general from 21 states in a suit that questions the Environmental Protection Agency's authority to implement the plan. American Farm Bureau President Bob Stallman has called the pollution limits "a remarkable power grab" by the EPA. Dismissing that claim, Herring cited the bay's economic and environmental importance in defense of the plan. "When the most promising plan to protect and restore the bay comes under attack, I am going to stand up for the health of Virginia families, for Virginia's economic interests, for Virginia's efforts to restore the Chesapeake Bay," Herring said in prepared remarks at a news conference at Fort Monroe, a historic former Army base at the southern end of the bay. The EPA is leading the six-state effort to restore the bay by 2025. The multibillion-dollar effort comprises Virginia, Maryland, West Virginia, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New York and the District of Columbia. The federal government took the lead on the cleanup after the states within the bay's vast watershed failed to act on promises to restore the bay. Seventeen million people live within the watershed. Pollution in the bay has created "dead zones" where nothing lives and has taken a toll on marine life such as the bay's signature blue crab.

EPA Wants Assurance on Best Management Practices for Chesapeake Bay

BNA DAILY ENVIRONMENT REPORT Best management practices that capture nutrient and sediment pollution from farm fields and city streets before it enters streams and rivers are welcomed by the Environmental Protection Agency, but the agency wants to go one step further in the effort to restore the Chesapeake Bay. The agency wants assurance that in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, best management practices, such as use of pervious concrete parking lots and fences that keep cattle 100 feet away from streams and rivers, are maintained for many years. Long-term assurance of BMP effectiveness is essential to state compliance with the federal

government's Chesapeake Bay restoration program, Jeff Corbin, the agency's special adviser on the bay, suggested April 9. States can earn pollution reduction credits for installed EPA-certified BMPs. "The big issue is how you provide assurance that BMPs continue to function well after installation," Corbin told BBNA at the 25th annual Virginia Environmental Symposium at the Virginia Military Institute. "How often are the inspections done and who does the inspections?" are the questions now being hashed out by the agency, the six states sharing the bay watershed, farmer groups and environmental groups, Corbin said. The EPA's push for long-term assurance of BMP effectiveness comes as it reviews the states' draft biennial milestone plans. Filed March 15, the states' milestone plans say what restoration policies and practices will be implemented over the next two years. The six states—Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia—are subject to a mandatory pollution reduction program designed to restore the bay, with all necessary policies and practices in place by 2025. "This one should scare us all," Russ Baxter, Virginia's deputy secretary for natural resources, half-joked when speaking about the agency's new demand. "Is that BMP put in five years [ago] still there? For agriculture and municipal governments, this is potentially a big deal."

South Side becomes a storm water lab

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE With the clock ticking on the federal mandate for Pittsburgh to fix its nagging storm water problem, a handpicked group of experts has focused on the South Side for new ways of keeping sewage out of the rivers. More than 60 engineers, landscape architects, environmental scientists and planners volunteered last week for the three-day "South Side Green Infrastructure Charrette" and targeted the old Birmingham neighborhood. The Brew House Association, an artists' collective located at the former Duquesne Brewing Co. building on South 21st Street, provided free use of its ground floor for the project, and 19 concerns sponsored the event, including the Allegheny County Sanitary Authority, Pittsburgh Water & Sewer Authority and UPMC. Whatever is learned by controlling storm water runoff along the half-mile strip of South 21st Street, from South Side Park to the Allegheny River, could be applied to neighborhoods throughout the city. "This is the first time we've done an exercise like this with a specific boundary," said Joel Perkovich, a sustainable design manager at Studio Phipps and event chairman at the Green Infrastructure Network, the group that organized the design exercise. The central issue of the event was storm water runoff. When it storms in Pittsburgh, rainwater flows into sanitary sewers, overflowing pipes and spilling raw sewage into the rivers at the rate of approximately 1 billion gallons per year. The sewage outflow is in violation of the federal Clean Water Act. In 2008, the Environmental Protection Agency gave the Alcosan until 2026 to fix its problem. In January, the EPA rejected Alcosan's proposal, leaving the authority searching for solutions. The proposals put forth by the green network could be just what Alcosan and the EPA are looking for.

A flood of optimism on nutrient pollution

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL It's not often that Wicomico Creekwatchers science coordinator Judith Stribling describes sharp increases in nutrient pollution as a good thing. But 2013 was an unprecedented year in the 11 years that the group has been collecting water-quality information on the Chesapeake Bay tributary. After three years of drought, the traditional sources of nutrient pollution – animal waste, over-fertilized lawns and farms, septic system drain fields – had become stockpiles of nitrogen and phosphorus. Then, the skies opened up, and the

47 inches of precipitation sent that pollution gushing into the Wicomico River. "It was almost like a worst-case scenario last year," said Stribling, a Salisbury University biology professor, "but there's some evidence that things are better than the long-term average." Contaminant levels were higher almost across the board compared with 2012, when a mere 38 inches of rain fell across the 180-square-mile watershed. Yet, of the four regions of the river monitored by the Creekwatchers, nitrogen concentrations were lower than the 2006-2011 average in the ponds and the upper portion, and about the same in the lower portion and Wicomico Creek, the group said in its annual report. Phosphorus concentrations were below average levels in the same areas, but they exceeded the average in the lower river and Wicomico Creek. Those long-term improvements may suggest that efforts to curb nutrient pollution are starting to work, Stribling said. "This is probably the coolest [annual report] yet," she added. "Last year was better, but it was like, well, it's because things were dry. But this time you can say things really are better." Stribling cited Salisbury's, storm drain filters, beefed-up state stormwater regulations on new development, cover crops planted by farmers and efforts to educate homeowners about fertilizer use. "That is good news for us," said Lee Richardson, a Willards farmer and a former president of the Wicomico County Farm Bureau. "We've done a lot of things, but haven't seen any improvements."

Range Resources will pay \$75K for Lycoming County spill

STATE IMPACT PENNSYLVANIA Range Resources has agreed to pay a \$75,000 fine for a July 2012 spill on a Lycoming County well pad, the state Department of Environmental Protection announced Friday. The DEP said 3,066 gallons of a manufactured brine solution leaked out of a storage tank and onto the well pad in Lewis Township. "This was a significant spill that Range reported to the department but did not properly remediate until nearly a year later," John Ryder, DEP's director of district oil and gas operations, said in [a press release](#). While the company did not submit a final report to DEP until June 2013, Range Resources claims there were no delays in the remediation process and that the company proceeded as directed by the department. In July 2012, researchers with Penn State University were working with Range at a well site located on the grounds of the Cornwall Mountain Hunting Club. The brine solution was being used to create a mud that operators use to pull drill cuttings out of the hole, and not for hydraulic fracturing. When the brine leaked out of the storage tank, the spill was contained on the well pad until a heavy rainstorm washed it off the site and caused the brine to flow into a tributary of the Trout Run stream. The DEP said there is no evidence any of the brine entered the main stream.

Government workforce is closing the gender pay gap, but reforms still needed, report says

WASHINGTON POST Women working for the federal government earn less than men overall but the gap is shrinking, and most of the difference is the result of women being concentrated in lower-paying jobs with too few occupying the top ranks, a government report issued Friday found. The Office of Personnel Management's study showed an overall gender pay gap for white-collar occupations of 12.7 percent in 2012, down from 19.8 percent in 2002 and 30 percent in 1992. "According to our comprehensive, in-depth review of 37 white-collar Federal job categories, in 2012, women were paid 87 cents for every dollar that a man was paid," OPM

Director Katherine Archuleta said on the agency's Web site. "In 1992, women in the Federal workforce made just 70 cents on the dollar." The report noted, however, that "differences in the distribution of males and females across occupational categories appear to explain much of the pay gap." The OPM study — which shows significant progress over 20 years, while acknowledging there's more work to do — is also ripe for political cherry-picking by conservatives who argue that gender pay equity is disappearing and that Democrats have raised the issue to mobilize women for the November midterm elections. That debate was center stage last week. On Tuesday, President Obama signed two executive orders, one that requires government contractors to report on salaries by gender and another that bars them from punishing employees who discuss salaries among themselves — a move that drew advocates' praise and conservatives' protests. On Wednesday, the Senate put a fine point on the controversy when it failed by six votes to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would have strengthened employee protections under the Equal Pay Act.

Ohio regulators halt fracking site, drawing link to quakes

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Friday) State geologists in Ohio have for the first time linked earthquakes in a geologic formation deep under the Appalachians to gas drilling, leading the state to issue new permit conditions in certain areas that are among the nation's strictest. A state investigation of five small tremors in the Youngstown area, in the Appalachian foothills, last month has found the high-pressure injection of sand and water that accompanies hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, in the Utica Shale may have increased pressure on a small, unknown fault, said State Oil & Gas Chief Rick Simmers. He called the link "probable." While earlier studies had linked earthquakes in the same region to deep-injection wells used for disposal of fracking wastewater, this marks the first time tremors have been tied directly to fracking, Simmers said. Five seismic events in March were all part of what was considered a single event and couldn't be easily felt by people. The state's new permit conditions are perhaps the most cautious yet put in place in the nation, he said. Glenda Besana-Ostman, a seismologist with the U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Reclamation, confirmed the finding is the first in the region to suggest a connection between the quakes and the actual extraction of oil and gas, as opposed to wastewater disposal. A deep-injection well in the same region of Ohio was found to be the likely cause of a series of quakes in the same region of Ohio in 2012. Under the new permit conditions, all new drilling sites in Ohio within 3 miles of a known fault or seismic activity of 2.0 magnitude or higher will be conditioned on the installation of sensitive seismic-monitoring equipment. Results will be directly available to regulators, Simmers said, so the state isn't reliant on drilling operators providing the data voluntarily.

Part of \$35 million investment in Delaware River watershed granted to the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary

PHILADELPHIA CENTER CITY WEEKLY PRESS (April 6) The William Penn Foundation granted over \$630,000 to the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary as part of a \$35 million multi-year initiative to protect and restore critical sources of drinking water for 15 million people, many in major cities including New York (NY), Philadelphia (PA), Camden (NJ), and Wilmington (DE). The total set of grants fund an unprecedented collaboration of leading conservation organizations who will align their work to protect land, restore streams, test

innovative approaches in ecologically significant places, and monitor results over time. Funds going to the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary will support collaborative efforts to improve two of the region's most critical water resources; the Schuylkill River in Pennsylvania and the Kirkwood-Cohansey Aquifer in New Jersey. Projects that conserve land and reduce runoff from farms will help to prevent pollution in the Schuylkill River, the largest river flowing into the Delaware River and Bay. Efforts in southern New Jersey will help monitor and conserve the dwindling supply of groundwater from the Kirkwood-Cohansey Aquifer, which feeds rivers, streams and wetlands, as well as people and businesses there... They also provide clean water, clean air, and valuable wildlife habitat that benefit their own communities and urban neighbors," said Jason Weller, Chief of USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service. "This partnership highlights how a cooperative approach for applying conservation activities on private and public land is essential for everyone in the watershed—whether they live in urban or rural areas." "EPA values collaborative initiatives like this that help organizations build greater capacity and leverage critical resources needed to tackle the next generation of water protection issues," said EPA Region 3 Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin.

Philadelphia Among Top 10 Cities With Energy Star Certified Buildings

KYW NEWS RADIO PHILADELPHIA (Friday) **PHILADELPHIA** (CBS) – The EPA releases its annual list of the 25 U.S. Cities with the most Energy Star certified buildings. This year, Philadelphia cracked the top 10. The Philadelphia Building Energy and Benchmarking Law was passed in 2012, requiring larger city buildings to report their energy usage. Policy and Program Manager with the Mayor's Office of Sustainability Alex Dews is thrilled Philly is #9 on this list. His office works directly with management of larger buildings in the city to help reduce their energy and water usage. "It's schools, churches, hospitals, office buildings, shopping centers — it's really a wide variety of building types and it's been great for us to work with all those folks." In essence, any commercial building over 50,000 square feet. Dews says they have come a long way, "In 2008 there were only 28 buildings in the city that were recognized through Energy Star and now there are more than 210 buildings that are getting that recognition through EPA in the region." Dews credits building owners and managers for their efforts and says owners of smaller buildings can always look to his office staff for help to improve their energy efficiency.

EPA: District has second-most energy-efficient buildings

WASHINGTON TIMES (Friday) A new Environmental Protection Agency ranking places the District second in the country with the most energy-efficient buildings. The city continued to hold on to its near-top ranking for the fifth year in the row, with 435 Energy Star certified buildings, according to the EPA. Los Angeles came in first place, with 443 Energy Star certified buildings. The certification is part of a voluntary EPA program that highlights energy-efficient buildings and products. The savings attributable to the District's Energy Star certified buildings is estimated at \$119 million each year and prevents energy emissions equal to the annual electric use of 69,800 homes, according to the EPA. Rounding out the top 10 cities with the most energy-efficient buildings were Atlanta, New York, San Francisco, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, Philadelphia and Houston.

PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

As leaders meet on climate, Ikea looks to wind power (Friday) As business leaders and members of a congressional task force on climate change met in Washington on Thursday to discuss how they were adapting, the Ikea Group trumped them by announcing a new renewable-energy project, its biggest worldwide. Rob Olson, chief financial officer and acting president of Ikea's U.S. division, based in Conshohocken, said the company was investing in a wind farm in Hoopeston, Ill., south of Chicago. It is the company's first wind farm, to be completed in 2015. The 49-turbine, 98-megawatt project is expected to generate enough energy to power 34,000 U.S. households. The wind farm's energy will go into the grid. Officials expect the power made will equal 18 percent of the electricity used by Ikea worldwide. "We are committed to renewable energy and to running our business in a way that minimized our carbon emissions, not only because of the environmental impact, but also because it makes good financial sense," Olson told the committee. Ikea also has installed 550,000 solar panels on stores in 11 countries. Many of the leaders told the task force they began their sustainability initiatives because customers demanded it. Then they realized it was making them money. Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D., R.I.) said lawmakers are "tantalizingly close" to instituting a carbon fee. "The problem I have is that the face of the corporate community in our world, in Washington, is totally at odds" with the message business leaders conveyed Thursday, he said. "The lobbying power that is brought to bear . . . is very heavily into denial."

Palm Sunday goes eco-friendly Each year from the time she was young, Joanne Miles would take the tall, yellowish-green palms that were handed out on the Sunday before Easter and transform them. Miles, 54, folded, twisted, and tucked the dry stalks into shapes of crosses, turning them into lapel pins and decorative symbols marking the holiest period of the Christian calendar. But for the last six years, that symbol of a historic arrival in Jerusalem has given way to the sustainability movement. The palms have gone all green. At Miles' congregation, Hope United Methodist Church in Havertown, where she lives, congregants have traded in traditional palms for "Eco-Palms," fanlike gatherings of fresh green leaves attached to a central stem and imported from Guatemala and Mexico. Eco-Palms are harvested and marketed in sustainable ways that help preserve the rain forest and provide an economic boost to palm workers and their communities, said program founder Dean Current, director of the Center for Integrated Natural Resource and Agricultural Management at the University of Minnesota. Hope United Methodist works with six churches that order Eco-Palms together, including St. Luke United Methodist in Bryn Mawr and Chestnut Hill United Church in Philadelphia. First Presbyterian Church in Springfield and St. John's Lutheran Church in Melrose Park also are among local churches that order Eco-Palms. "It's a justice issue," said the Rev. Jim McIntire of Hope United Methodist. "Eco-Palms are harvested in an ecologically friendly way, and the workers are paid for the work they are doing."

Chesco calls for more pipeline information from state WEST PIKELAND Residents and local and county officials made the case Thursday for improved information sharing among residents, municipalities, and pipeline companies in front of a state committee that gives recommendations to the General Assembly on conservation issues. Those who testified at the state's Joint Conservation Committee hearing said they have had trouble getting timely information about pipeline projects. State Sen. Andrew Dinniman (D., Chester) and Sen. John Rafferty (R., Montgomery) hope the testimony gives momentum to a bill they and 10 other senators introduced in February 2013 to improve how the Department of Environmental Protection shares information about pipeline projects. The act would require the department to more quickly notify everyone affected by proposed pipelines and to post permit applications and relevant documents on its website. One recommendation was the formation of an entity to disseminate information about pipelines in the state, as Chester County's online Pipeline Information Center does within the county. The county rolled out the Web pages at chescopa green.org on March 28.

Chemicals on pet collars can affect children Got fleas on your cat? Ticks on your dog? In deciding on a treatment - and yes, you do want to treat these little varmints - not all chemicals are equal. Recently, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced an agreement with two companies to take pet collars containing the chemical propoxur off the market. After an assessment, the agency found "unacceptable risks to children" the first day after the collar is put onto the pet. Here's the rub: The products won't actually be gone until 2016, if then. Under the terms of the agreement, the companies, Sergeant's Pet Care Products Inc. and Wellmark International, can distribute the products until April 1, 2016. Even after that, stores can sell them until all are gone. The EPA says the collars leave a residue on the pet's fur that can be absorbed through the skin of children who hug or pet the animal. Also, children can ingest the chemical if they pet the animal and then put their hands in their mouths. The move came after the Natural Resources Defense Council sued the agency. It also asked for action on a second flea and tick chemical that the EPA did not address - tetrachlorvinphos, or TCVP. "We've known for a long time that they're neurotoxic," said Miriam Rotkin-Ellman, a senior scientist with the national environmental nonprofit. "These products should not be on the market."

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PHILADELPHIA CENTER CITY WEEKLY PRESS

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PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

South Side becomes a storm water lab With the clock ticking on the federal mandate for Pittsburgh to fix its nagging storm water problem, a handpicked group of experts has focused on the South Side for new ways of keeping sewage out of the rivers. More than 60 engineers, landscape architects, environmental scientists and planners volunteered last week for the three-day "South Side Green Infrastructure Charrette" and targeted the old Birmingham neighborhood. The Brew House Association, an artists' collective located at the former Duquesne Brewing Co. building on South 21st Street, provided free use of its ground floor for the project, and 19 concerns sponsored the event, including the Allegheny County Sanitary Authority, Pittsburgh Water & Sewer Authority and UPMC. Whatever is learned by controlling storm water runoff along the half-mile strip of South 21st Street, from South Side Park to the Allegheny River, could be applied to neighborhoods throughout the city. "This is the first time we've done an exercise like this with a specific boundary," said Joel Perkovich, a sustainable design manager at Studio Phipps and event chairman at the Green Infrastructure Network, the group that organized the design exercise. The central issue of the event was storm water runoff. When it storms in Pittsburgh, rainwater flows into sanitary sewers, overflowing pipes and spilling raw sewage into the rivers at the rate of approximately 1 billion gallons per year. The sewage outflow is in violation of the federal Clean Water Act. In 2008, the Environmental Protection Agency gave the

Alcosan until 2026 to fix its problem. In January, the EPA rejected Alcosan's proposal, leaving the authority searching for solutions. The proposals put forth by the green network could be just what Alcosan and the EPA are looking for.

Commentary: Fear of Russia, fear of fracking Let's find a way to produce more independent information about fracking. With Russia menacing Ukraine and Europe with its natural gas heft, the cry has gone out from British Prime Minister David Cameron, the Wall Street Journal and even (implicitly) President Barack Obama: more fracking! If only the European Union would stop importing a third of its natural gas from Russia, the argument goes, it would be easier to impose sterner sanctions and go beyond grandly booting Russia from the G-8. Fracking sounds like a simple and smart solution. Not only can the United States export liquefied shale gas to Europe, but Europe can also help itself diversify by embracing a technology that taps homegrown reserves. The trouble, of course, is that much of Europe, especially the western half, doesn't want to frack. France (which has considerable reserves) has banned it, Germany has effectively done the same, and Mr. Cameron's enthusiasm has been slowed in the United Kingdom by not-in-my-backyard environmental protests. As Conservative MP Nick Herbert put it last year, fracking has sparked a "fear of the unknown." Ah, those pesky known unknowns! So, here's a way to help spread fracking: Banish the unknowns. There is still so much uncertainty and hence controversy surrounding fracking, even in the shale-crazed United States, that other countries inevitably have qualms about adopting the technology even as they hanker for its benefits.

PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE REVIEW

Worth property owner wants out of 2005 gas lease Mustafa Tayfur signed an oil and gas lease for his 107-acre property in Worth in 2005 that paid him just \$3 an acre for drilling rights, but with the promise of 12 percent royalties on any minerals extracted from the ground. The company never drilled for oil or gas, and Tayfur, now hundreds of thousands of dollars in debt, petitioned a federal bankruptcy judge to break the lease with SWEPI LP, a subsidiary of Shell Oil Co., so he can get a more lucrative deal to help pay off his debts. A judge in February refused. In Butler County, where drilling for natural gas through fracking is a growing industry, the Tayfur case could provide a valuable lesson to anyone considering an oil and gas lease, legal experts said. "Unfortunately, (Tayfur) didn't have a bad contract, he had a bad deal, and you can't get out of a bad deal," said Marcellus shale attorney Steven Townsend, a Downtown attorney not involved in the case. In 2009, there were 79 well permits for so-called unconventional wells issued in Butler County and 19 wells drilled, according to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. In 2013, the state issued 160 permits, and 92 wells were drilled.

STATE IMPACT PENNSYLVANIA

Economics may hinder Berks County gas-to-liquids plant A proposal to build a plant that would transform Pennsylvania's cheap, abundant natural gas into more expensive motor fuel is generating controversy in Berks County. If built, the gas-to-liquids (GTL) plant would be one of the first facilities of its kind in the United States. But industry analysts say there's a reason these kinds of plants are so rare—the economics often don't make a lot of sense. Jen Byrne watches and worries as children run around the playground behind the day care she owns. If the plant is built in South Heidelberg Township, it would be—literally—in her backyard. "I thought there's no way they'd put that right there," she says, looking out at the empty lot. "We have all these

children here. There's homes all around. My biggest concern is air and water pollution." The idea behind the GTL facility is to transform Pennsylvania's natural gas into expensive liquid motor fuel—it would produce gasoline that can go right into a car. The facility is projected to cost \$800 million to \$1 billion and produce about 500,000 gallons per day of gasoline and liquid petroleum. It's planned for a 63-acre site about 10 miles west of Reading. Although the land is zoned for light industrial uses, it's currently an empty field surrounded by residential neighborhoods.

Range Resources will pay \$75K for Lycoming County spill Range Resources has agreed to pay a \$75,000 fine for a July 2012 spill on a Lycoming County well pad, the state Department of Environmental Protection announced Friday. The DEP said 3,066 gallons of a manufactured brine solution leaked out of a storage tank and onto the well pad in Lewis Township. "This was a significant spill that Range reported to the department but did not properly remediate until nearly a year later," John Ryder, DEP's director of district oil and gas operations, said in a press release. While the company did not submit a final report to DEP until June 2013, Range Resources claims there were no delays in the remediation process and that the company proceeded as directed by the department. In July 2012, researchers with Penn State University were working with Range at a well site located on the grounds of the Cornwall Mountain Hunting Club. The brine solution was being used to create a mud that operators use to pull drill cuttings out of the hole, and not for hydraulic fracturing. When the brine leaked out of the storage tank, the spill was contained on the well pad until a heavy rainstorm washed it off the site and caused the brine to flow into a tributary of the Trout Run stream. The DEP said there is no evidence any of the brine entered the main stream.

HARRISBURG PATRIOT NEWS

More than 300 trees will be planted on Wilson College campus - in one day Volunteers are being sought to plant more than 300 native trees and shrubs along the Conococheague Creek on the Wilson College campus in Chambersburg on April 26. The event kicks off Trees for Tomorrow, a county-wide effort to plant 150,000 new trees in the Conococheague Watershed. Trees for Tomorrow is a joint initiative of the Franklin County Commissioners and the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, with funding provided by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds. The goal is to plant 150,000 new trees by 2016, said Donna Morelli, director of the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay's Pennsylvania office. Organizers are hoping for 100 volunteers on April 26. Registration is at 8 a.m. in the parking area behind Brooks Complex. Planting will continue until 3:30 p.m. Volunteers will work in teams, planting native trees and shrubs in pre-dug holes along the Conococheague, starting roughly behind Wilson's Brooks Science Complex and running northwest to a point before the bridge leading to Wilson's equestrian center and organic farm. After the planting, volunteers are invited to a free lunch in the dining hall. In the afternoon, student organizations will have booths offering things like tie-dying (participants should bring a T-shirt), fruit smoothies and root beer floats, food/snacks, T-shirts and face painting. Tours will be given of Fulton Farm, the Brooks Science Complex, stream improvements at Wilson and the overall campus.

LANCASTER NEWSPAPERS

Editorial: Prep for the pipeline fight The heavies are coming. Are we ready for them? Williams Partners, an Oklahoma-based company that makes billions of dollars moving energy around the

country, says it wants to carve a pipeline across the hills and glens of western Lancaster County to move fracked natural gas from the Marcellus Shale down to the east coast. Locals are rising in outrage. Outrage won't be enough. Williams is a Fortune 200 company, "one of the leading energy infrastructure companies in North America," by its own boast. "It owns interests in or operates 15,000 miles of interstate gas pipelines, 1,000 miles of NGL transportation pipelines, and more than 10,000 miles of oil and gas gathering pipelines." This is Big Energy on steroids. Even their lobbyists have lobbyists. They are not going to be daunted by grass-roots passion, however sincere. We'll get our first look at them April 29, at a Lancaster County Commissioners work session in the Government Center at 150 N. Queen St. Williams will make a presentation. The commissioners will ask questions. Then the public can comment. The opposition already is organizing around Lancaster County Conservancy and at least two citizens groups formed because of the project. That's a start. But it will have to be coordinated, flexible and cooperative. The opposition should continue its good start in using social media to communicate and reach out. And they should reach out. They must get past the usual circles of environmentalist and preservationists. To stop this will take an effort from the whole county. The more roots, the more grass: church groups have a stake in this. Sportsmen and sportswomen have much at stake here. Urban organizations have skills and volunteers who can be tapped. The opposition has to be bigger than anyone's political bubble, and it must remember that this land we share is the most common cause we all can have. It should be as big as Lancaster County, and as diverse. But even that might not be enough. Our neighbor counties will be scarred by this project, too. Lebanon already has put hard questions to Williams. Talk to them. Look farther, beyond the state line. Talk to communities that have fought or suffered from similar pipelines. For instance, Williams and a partner have been involved in a \$1.5 billion project to move Marcellus gas down to the Gulf coast. They've hit a wall of resistance in Kentucky, and the struggle there is well-advanced and turning nasty, while ours is just beginning. We should talk to the resistance there, learn from it, coordinate with it.

TOWANDA DAILY REVIEW

Cabot donates \$2.5 million to Lackawanna College; largest ever by the driller Lackawanna College announced it received the largest private donation in its history on Friday, a gift by an oil and gas company seeking to solidify its place in Northeast Pennsylvania. The \$2.5 million gift from Cabot Oil & Gas Corp. will boost the college's \$3 million endowment to \$4 million. The other \$1.5 million will be used for equipment, training, faculty and staff, student curriculum and internships in the college's School of Petroleum & Natural Gas. Since the school's start in 2009, it has grown to include 140 students projected for fall 2014, said the school's executive director, Richard Marquardt. It offers four majors: petroleum and natural gas technology, measurement, business administration and natural gas compression technology. Plans are to expand the school to serve 300 students, Marquardt said. Starting the school was a risk more than five years ago, said the college's president Mark Volk at an event celebrating the gift Friday. The Marcellus Shale gas reserves in Susquehanna County were not yet proven and the industry's long-term presence was less certain. "Let's take a chance," Volk said he remembers thinking. "Somebody's got to do this." Today, Cabot's wells in Susquehanna are the top-producing in the state, and the School of Petroleum & Natural Gas has a center in New Milford where students get hands-on experience with the same equipment used in the industry. Its instructors are mostly retired petroleum engineers, many with multiple degrees, Marquardt said. The school offers summer internship opportunities at Cabot, Linde Corp. and Williams, he said. Graduating students have a

90 percent placement rate in the industry. Cabot's last major gift was \$2 million in 2012 to help build a new Montrose facility for Endless Mountains Health Systems. The gift to Lackawanna College is its largest ever, Cabot external affairs coordinator Bill desRosiers said.

WILLIAMSPORT SUN GAZETTE

DEP ground water contamination investigation continues WELLSBORO - The state Department of Environmental Protection's Oil and Gas Program continues its investigation of a leaking flowback fluid impoundment at EQT's Phoenix Pad S in Duncan Township, Tioga County that occurred in May 2012.

ASSOCIATED PRESS (PA)

Gas driller gives \$2.5M to Lackawanna College SCRANTON (AP) — A gas driller is giving \$2.5 million to Lackawanna College in Scranton. The gift by Cabot Oil & Gas will be used to fund the college's School of Petroleum & Natural Gas in New Milford. Lackawanna College started the program in 2009 in response to the boom in Marcellus Shale natural gas drilling. Some 90 percent of the school's graduates get jobs in the field. Lackawanna will put \$1 million into an endowment for student scholarships, and the rest will be used equipment, training, staff and faculty development and other needs. It's the largest private donation in the history of the two-year college.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

WASHINGTON POST

Federal Diary column: House approves budget that would save money by taking from federal workers (Friday) It was a lovely day at the Capitol Building — at least outside. The cherry blossoms and tulip trees were aglow, groups of children in matching shirts scampered about and members of Congress posed with eager constituents on the Capitol steps. Inside in the House chamber, the mood was fairly friendly, too. Discussion between Republicans and Democrats on a budget measure was pointed but not angry, as those debates sometimes can be. By lunchtime the votes were cast, and suddenly Thursday became gloomy for federal employees. The House approved a Republican spending plan, sponsored by Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan (Wis.), which would effectively cut the pay of federal workers and end their student loan reimbursement program, among other elements. Senate approval of the GOP budget is not likely. “If enacted, the budget’s policies would further erode employee morale and hinder recruitment and retention,” said Joseph A. Beaudoin, president of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association. “Chairman Ryan’s budget sends a clear message — federal employees, and the work they perform, aren’t valued. Is this the message we should be sending to those who take criminals off our streets and keep them behind bars, assist our military at home and abroad, care for veterans, and help us prepare for and recover from severe weather?”

Federal Eye: How salaries compare by gender for federal employees (Friday) Women working for the federal government earn less than men overall but the gap is shrinking and most of the difference can be explained by women being more concentrated in occupations that are lower-

paying, a government report being issued Friday finds. The report from the Office of Personnel Management shows an overall gender pay gap for white-collar occupations of 12.7 percent as of 2012, down from 19.8 percent in 2002 and 30 percent in 1992. However, it added that all but 3.8 percentage points of the 2012 gap can be explained by differences in occupation and certain other factors. “The differences in the distribution of males and females across occupational categories appear to explain much of the pay gap,” the report says. OPM’s report — which shows a closing gap but still significant work to do — caps a week of intense debate over the issue of gender pay equity. On Tuesday, President Obama issued two executive orders meant to push federal contractors on pay equity, a move that drew praise from advocates and criticism from conservatives who debated the legitimacy of a pay gap between men and women and accused the administration of pandering to female voters for the November midterm elections. Also, the Senate this week failed to muster the needed 60 votes to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act that would have strengthened employee protections under the Equal Pay Act. Obama’s orders require government contractors to report on salaries they pay by gender and bar them from retaliating against employees who discuss salaries among themselves.

Government workforce is closing the gender pay gap, but reforms still needed, report says Women working for the federal government earn less than men overall but the gap is shrinking, and most of the difference is the result of women being concentrated in lower-paying jobs with too few occupying the top ranks, a government report issued Friday found. The Office of Personnel Management’s study showed an overall gender pay gap for white-collar occupations of 12.7 percent in 2012, down from 19.8 percent in 2002 and 30 percent in 1992. “According to our comprehensive, in-depth review of 37 white-collar Federal job categories, in 2012, women were paid 87 cents for every dollar that a man was paid,” OPM Director Katherine Archuleta said on the agency’s Web site. “In 1992, women in the Federal workforce made just 70 cents on the dollar.” The report noted, however, that “differences in the distribution of males and females across occupational categories appear to explain much of the pay gap.” The OPM study — which shows significant progress over 20 years, while acknowledging there’s more work to do — is also ripe for political cherry-picking by conservatives who argue that gender pay equity is disappearing and that Democrats have raised the issue to mobilize women for the November midterm elections. That debate was center stage last week. On Tuesday, President Obama signed two executive orders, one that requires government contractors to report on salaries by gender and another that bars them from punishing employees who discuss salaries among themselves — a move that drew advocates’ praise and conservatives’ protests. On Wednesday, the Senate put a fine point on the controversy when it failed by six votes to pass the Paycheck Fairness Act, which would have strengthened employee protections under the Equal Pay Act.

Report shows shrinking pay gap for federal employees, but few women are in top jobs Uncle Sam’s gender pay gap is not nearly as bad as it used to be, but what remains demonstrates the difficult nature of the problem. The pay gap between male and female federal employees, with men in the better position, “has dramatically shrunk,” says a report issued Friday by the Office of Personnel Management. From 1992 to 2012, the OPM found, the gap fell from about 30 percent to 13 percent for federal white-collar positions. “According to our comprehensive, in-depth review of 37 white-collar Federal job categories, in 2012, women were paid 87 cents for every dollar that a man was paid,” OPM Director Katherine Archuleta said in a blog post. “In 1992,

women in the Federal workforce made just 70 cents on the dollar.” Those statistics, however, fail to reveal a more complex picture. Diving deeper, the OPM found that in some cases there was a pay gap in favor of women. Sometimes the data indicate near-parity. The big issue, however, appears to be a lack of women in high places. Women hold only about one-third of the Senior Executive Service (SES) positions and not much more of the top General Schedule slots, GS14 and GS15. “That’s a number that needs to grow,” Archuleta said. “For starters, we need to address the imbalance of hiring in all occupations. . . . That’s why we have made it a top priority to mentor women who hold GS14 and GS15 positions to advance into SES jobs.” Agencies must build stronger employment and promotion pipelines for women, improve salary transparency and simply obey the law, Archuleta said. “We won’t be satisfied until women working in federal jobs earn the same as their male counterparts, at every level.”

Feds talk: How do you feel about veterans’ preference for federal hiring? The Partnership for Public Service this month released a report calling for controversial civil-service reforms, including changes to the federal government’s hiring practices. Federal agencies select new employees based partly on a points system, awarding extra points to job applicants who are former U.S. troops. The partnership recommended keeping that veterans’ hiring preference in place. We wondered how federal workers feel about the existing guidelines for veterans. A Federal Eye survey last week asked federal employees to share their thoughts on the matter, in addition to other elements of the civil-service system. Not all respondents agreed with the preference policies. Peter Gamba, a Treasury Department employee from the Harper’s Ferry area, said the guidelines are “more than frustrating” and “a real road block to those of us who did not serve.” “When two qualified workers apply for the job, the most qualified should get it, not the one who was a veteran yet not as qualified,” Gamba added. Even military veterans complained about the rules. “I am totally opposed to [veterans-preference] hiring and believe it’s bad for good government and bad for the country,” said Robert Mikol, a former U.S. Marine who works in Alaska for the Bureau of Land Management. “I am seeing former members of the military and military spouses get jobs that they are truly unqualified for.”

WASHINGTON TIMES

EPA: District has second-most energy-efficient buildings (Friday) A new Environmental Protection Agency ranking places the District second in the country with the most energy-efficient buildings. The city continued to hold on to its near-top ranking for the fifth year in the row, with 435 Energy Star certified buildings, according to the EPA. Los Angeles came in first place, with 443 Energy Star certified buildings. The certification is part of a voluntary EPA program that highlights energy-efficient buildings and products. The savings attributable to the District’s Energy Star certified buildings is estimated at \$119 million each year and prevents energy emissions equal to the annual electric use of 69,800 homes, according to the EPA. Rounding out the top 10 cities with the most energy-efficient buildings were Atlanta, New York, San Francisco, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, Philadelphia and Houston

DELAWARE

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL

A flood of optimism on nutrient pollution It's not often that Wicomico Creekwatchers science coordinator Judith Stribling describes sharp increases in nutrient pollution as a good thing. But 2013 was an unprecedented year in the 11 years that the group has been collecting water-quality information on the Chesapeake Bay tributary. After three years of drought, the traditional sources of nutrient pollution – animal waste, over-fertilized lawns and farms, septic system drain fields – had become stockpiles of nitrogen and phosphorus. Then, the skies opened up, and the 47 inches of precipitation sent that pollution gushing into the Wicomico River. "It was almost like a worst-case scenario last year," said Stribling, a Salisbury University biology professor, "but there's some evidence that things are better than the long-term average." Contaminant levels were higher almost across the board compared with 2012, when a mere 38 inches of rain fell across the 180-square-mile watershed. Yet, of the four regions of the river monitored by the Creekwatchers, nitrogen concentrations were lower than the 2006-2011 average in the ponds and the upper portion, and about the same in the lower portion and Wicomico Creek, the group said in its annual report. Phosphorus concentrations were below average levels in the same areas, but they exceeded the average in the lower river and Wicomico Creek. Those long-term improvements may suggest that efforts to curb nutrient pollution are starting to work, Stribling said. "This is probably the coolest [annual report] yet," she added. "Last year was better, but it was like, well, it's because things were dry. But this time you can say things really are better." Stribling cited Salisbury's, storm drain filters, beefed-up state stormwater regulations on new development, cover crops planted by farmers and efforts to educate homeowners about fertilizer use. "That is good news for us," said Lee Richardson, a Willards farmer and a former president of the Wicomico County Farm Bureau. "We've done a lot of things, but haven't seen any improvements."

Delaware's mud crabs prove to be butt kickers Score one for the natives. Delaware's native mud crabs that is. Feared on the brink of being wiped out a decade ago by invasive Asian shore crabs, the native mud crabs are once again kings of their muddy domains. DE-LA-WARE! DE-LA-WARE!! DE-LA-WARE!!! The chants of victory echo across Delaware Bay as the invaders crawl away. Charles Epifanio, a scientist in the University of Delaware's College of Earth, Ocean, and Environment was shocked at the sea change. Epifanio started researching Asian shore crabs with support from Delaware Sea Grant a few years after they first appeared in Delaware Bay in 1988. "When this crab arrived here and took over the rocky intertidal habitat, it was remarkable," Epifanio said. "It wasn't gradual. It exploded." By 2001, Asian shore crabs had all but replaced two of the three native species of mud crabs. Researchers assumed the trend would continue and did not resume counts until a follow-up project by a summer intern in 2011 to see whether there were any changes. The resurgence of the native crab found by the intern so shocked Epifanio – "At first, I thought she had it wrong," Epifanio said – that he went back out with the student to check her technique. Epifanio and a graduate student then repeated the experiments in 2012 and 2013 and found the same thing. The invasive Asian shore crabs, which in 2001 had made up 75 percent of the crabs found in rocky habitat near the mouth of Delaware Bay, now made up just 25 percent. Rock on you butt-kicking Delaware mud crabs. Rock on.

Milton residents await decision on property taxes for green energy MILTON – Residents who installed solar panels on their homes may have felt some relief in their energy bills, but it was paired with frustration with their property taxes. Town Council is mulling a proposed ordinance,

which would either exempt solar panels and other “green” energy installments from property taxes or tax them at a lower rate. Council members began hearing appeals on the taxes in January, after residents complained their property taxes had increased because the solar panels were considered an improvement to their homes. Most home improvements or additions, such as a pool, raise a property’s value, which increases its taxes. When the town taxed residents, it treated the solar panels like such an improvement, rather than as an outdoor piece of the home mechanical systems. “We didn’t get in front of this green initiative, and that’s unfortunate,” Mayor Marion Jones said. “But in the meantime, all those tax appeals have been put on hold and we’re not requiring anything until the ordinance is resolved.” Jones and Councilman Emory West said officials are comparing green energy ordinances in other municipalities and counties, including Harrington, Delaware City and Milford. Many towns do not increase property taxes for green renovations, so there’s a possibility Milton will decide against taxing residents as well, West said.

DELAWARE CAPE GAZETTE

Shirley Price shares views on land-use planning Shirley Price, a candidate for the District 4 seat on the five-member Sussex County Council, wants to change the way the county does business. “Three people run this county, and we have an opportunity this fall to elect two new council members who recognize the need to plan for our future or pay the consequences,” Price told the Eastern Sussex Democratic Club April 3. “We are not prepared for the growth that is headed our way.” It’s just amazing that despite the obvious need for a certified land-use planner, Sussex does not have one,” she said. “We have no one to assess the impact of thousands of zoning permits that were approved years ago and are still on the books without updated requirements. We need more of the expertise necessary to plan wisely for the future. The council majority apparently is not interested in making sure they have the best information to make land-use decisions.” Price pointed out that the county has a land-use plan, but many of the ordinances needed to enforce the plan have not been enacted by the council majority. “Council must sign off on a new land-use plan by 2018, but if the ordinances are not put in place to make it work, it will be another sham. And if Sussex County continues to elect the same people, we’ll have the same results.”

WEST VIRGINIA

CHARLESTON GAZETTE

‘New River Gorge of northern West Virginia’ to become DNR wildlife management area
ALBRIGHT, W.Va. — A nondescript crevice-dwelling snail with a shell the diameter of a quarter played a starring role in the preservation of a 7.5-mile stretch of Cheat Canyon under an agreement finalized late last week. The Conservation Fund, working with The Nature Conservancy, purchased the property, which includes a 3,800-acre, rim-to-rim tract of canyon stretching northward from the outskirts of Albright to a segment of Sandy Creek, from The Forestland Group, a timber investment fund. Over the next two years, the land will be transferred to the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources and become a wildlife management area focused primarily on rare species protection. As a WMA, the land will be open to the public for waterborne recreation, fishing, hiking, birding and hunting, although segments containing key

habitat for rare species are expected to be closed or marked with caution signs. The canyon contains the best whitewater of the lower Cheat, used by commercial rafting outfitters and their clients, and thousands of kayakers annually. It also supports a smallmouth bass fishery that is rebounding following years of pollution from acid mine drainage now being neutralized through limestone sand treatments in its tributaries. A segment of the 330-mile Allegheny Trail that had been declared off-limits to hikers by a previous landowner, causing a major detour, runs the length of the property.

GAO backs science on MSHA black lung rule CHARLESTON, W.Va. — Federal regulators used appropriate science about the potential risks of coal miners developing black lung when they drew up a proposal to cut in half the legal limit on exposure to dust that causes the deadly disease, a second U.S. Government Accountability Office report on the rule-making has found. The new GAO report, released Wednesday, dismissed coal industry complaints that the U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration had misused recent data on the trends in black lung prevalence in developing its draft rule, which was proposed in October 2010 and has been stuck at the White House since August 2013. GAO said that MSHA based its proposal to cut legal dust limits from 2 milligrams of dust per cubic meter of air to 1 milligram per cubic meter on two reports and six epidemiological studies that concluded lowering the dust exposure limit would reduce miners' risk of developing black lung. "MSHA's proposed coal mine dust limit was supported by these reports and studies because, unlike recent [black lung] trend data, they included information needed to conduct a reliable epidemiological analysis of disease risks associated with different levels of exposure to coal dust," the GAO report said. Black lung, or coal workers' pneumoconiosis, is an irreversible and potentially deadly disease caused by exposure to coal dust. One goal of the 1969 federal coal-mine safety law was to eliminate the disease. Deaths declined for years, but experts have been warning since the 1990s that the dust limits needed to be tightened. Despite improvements since the law was passed, black lung has claimed the lives of 75,000 coal miners nationwide since 1968. MSHA, under the direction of former United Mine Workers safety director Joe Main, has repeatedly pushed back its time line for finalizing its 2010 proposal to test the dust limits. And the proposal was further delayed by a budget measure pushed by congressional Republicans, which delayed any MSHA action until GAO performed an analysis of the issue.

Freedom trucking MCHM wastewater out of state (Friday) Freedom Industries is trucking wastewater containing Crude MCHM, the coal-cleaning chemical that contaminated the Kanawha Valley's drinking water in January, to disposal sites in Ohio and North Carolina, where some of it is being injected into underground wells. Kelley Gillenwater, spokeswoman for the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection, said Freedom Industries, the company whose tanks leaked the chemical, has sent at least five tanker trucks of wastewater to four out-of-state facilities this week. Three loads of wastewater from the Freedom Industries site on the Elk River have been sent to two landfill facilities in Ohio and one in North Carolina. Those tankers were filled with rainwater and melted snow that had collected in trenches dug on the site to keep runoff from entering the river. Two other tankers took wastewater from Poca Blending, Freedom's sister company in Nitro, to an underground-injection control well site in Ohio. These types of wells inject hazardous as well as non-hazardous wastes into deep rock formations. The wastewater from Poca Blending was vacuumed from the Freedom site and the Elk River immediately after the Jan. 9 leak. It was then stored at the Nitro facility. Tanker trucks usually

can hold a maximum of about 7,000 gallons of liquid, which means the vast majority of wastewater still remains on the Freedom and Poca Blending sites. Gillenwater said that, before this week's tanker trucks went out, there was 700,000 gallons of wastewater at Freedom Industries and 60,000 gallons at Poca Blending. Freedom had been mixing wastewater with sawdust and disposing of it at a landfill in Hurricane. However, the company stopped after the city filed a lawsuit to stop the practice.

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- See more at:

<http://www.wvgazette.com/article/20140413/GZ01/140419741/1101#sthash.YsBP0u6O.dpuf>

CHARLESTON DAILY MAIL

Coal's clout endures in Washington even as jobs decline Natalie Tennant, the presumptive Democratic nominee for West Virginia's open U.S. Senate seat, got an earful visiting a company where workers said President Barack Obama's environmental policies threaten their jobs. "I'll fight it," Tennant said of a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency rule affecting coal-fired power plants during a campaign stop at McBride Electrical Inc., a company in Welch that builds power lines for coal producers. "You have to have somebody who will stand up." Her outspoken opposition to the policies of a president of her own party reflects the unique politics of coal-mining states, which keep Congress stocked with industry allies even as mining jobs wane. In Kentucky, another coal state, Democrat Alison Grimes is siding with the industry as she battles for the seat of Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell. "These Democrats can't even get in the game unless they make sure voters know they don't parrot the administration on energy and on coal policy in particular," said Stu Rothenberg, editor of the nonpartisan Rothenberg Political Report. Despite vigorous environmental and public-health pressure to kill it off, coal remains stubbornly resilient. Though its share of U.S. power generation fell to 38 percent last year from

almost half in 2007, it's still the nation's No. 1 fuel for making electricity — releasing twice the greenhouse gas emissions of natural gas for the amount of power generated. Globally, coal accounts for 40 percent of all power production and is growing in some markets, especially China and India.

BECKLEY REGISTER-HERALD

Be prepared for disaster Area residents get useful advice. Do you have the things you need to survive a long power outage? What about a flood? Would you say you're ready if disaster hits? If you're not, you're in the same boat as many people today, officials say. To help people be ready for anything, the Disaster Preparedness Fair was started and it's in its second year. "We went through so many disasters just locally and major disasters," Fayette County Emergency Preparedness Planner Theresa White said. "We have had 14 disasters in Fayette County since 2001. That's a massive amount to go through. The people that come through each one seem like they're no more prepared than they were the last time. "Our mentality was to try to help in peace time before disaster happens so we could impact people's lives so they would know 'We need to keep at least a case of water in the house so if something happens it won't be a massive problem.' At least they would be prepared for the initial shock."

WEST VIRGINIA STATE JOURNAL

River sweep volunteers needed The Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission, along with several state and environmental agencies from Pennsylvania through Illinois, is looking for volunteers for the 25th annual River Sweep. River Sweep 2014 is scheduled for June 21 along the shoreline of the Ohio River and its many tributaries. ORSANCO is the water pollution control agency for the Ohio River and its tributaries. More than 3,000 miles of shoreline is combed for trash and debris as part of River Sweep, which encompasses six states. Potential volunteers can find information at OhioRiverSweep.org or by calling 1-800-359-3977.

Industry to push again for pooling in natural gas shales An industry push to allow pooling in natural gas-rich shale formations died in the recently concluded sessions of the state Legislature, but supporters vow to try again. Pooling would permit the extraction of gas from an area even if some landowners object. The industry says pooling is necessary to efficiently extract gas and it claims all owners would be treated fairly. It is controversial. Consider: Some call it "forced pooling," because mineral owners who hold out on signing a lease and owners who can't be found can be forced to participate. On the other hand, industry portrays pooling as a good thing for everyone. Steve Roberts of the West Virginia Chamber of Commerce has described it this way: "Pooling allows the majority of landowners to benefit from gas royalties while still protecting minority interests. Pooling also protects surface owners, communities and the environment by reducing the number of wells needed to recover gas deposits." The state chamber, which bills itself as "the voice of business in West Virginia," formed a coalition midway through the 2014 regular legislative session — "Pooling Together for West Virginia." The group also unveiled a website, www.poolingtogether.com.

WHEELING INTELLIGENCER

Utica Shale Rush Comes to W.Va. MOUNDSVILLE - For several years, companies drilled into the Marcellus Shale in West Virginia and the Utica Shale in Ohio. Now the Utica rush has come to the Mountain State. Fossil Creek Ohio is signing Utica Shale leases in Marshall County, with

plans to start sinking wells in the near future. The company said each well will cost up to \$22 million to drill, compared to about \$7 million that some companies have publicly said they are paying to drill in the Marcellus. Other companies also are signing leases. The Utica Shale sits below the Marcellus, more than a 2 miles beneath the Earth's surface. "I can't tell you how much we are paying per acre, but it is more than any other company over there," Fossil Creek President Chris Rowntree said. "It depends on where your land is located, though." The highest known offers for Marcellus Shale leases in the Ohio Valley would pay \$7,300 per acre, along with 20 percent in production royalties. Landowners who have signed Marcellus leases may or may not have also leased their Utica rights, depending upon the individual agreements. The Marcellus formation lies about 6,000 feet beneath the surface. Rowntree said his company could drill as deep as 13,000 feet to reach the Utica formation in Marshall County. To put that in perspective, there are 5,280 feet in a mile, so Rowntree's company could drill nearly 2.5 miles deep to tap the natural gas reserves. "Not many people have drilled that deep in West Virginia," West Virginia Oil and Natural Gas Association Executive Director Corky Demarco said. "We have not done a lot of exploration on (the Utica) yet. It has been more economical to drill only to about 6,000 feet to get gas than to go clear to 13,000 feet."

DEP: Marshall Pipeline Rupture Scorched Trees Over Two Acres MOUNDSVILLE - The West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection continues investigating the Williams Energy 12-inch natural gas pipeline rupture that took place in Marshall County's Marcellus Shale field a week ago. "The explosion created a 10-foot crater, and the resulting fire scorched trees over an approximately 2-acre area," DEP spokeswoman Kelley J. Gillenwater said Friday. "The rupture most likely occurred at a weld point in the pipeline, which was buried and along a steep slope," she added, noting there was anywhere from 600-900 pounds per square-inch of pressure on the line at the time. Although both the DEP and Williams agree no one was injured because of the April 5 pipeline rupture, they differ on the scale of the damage. "There were no reported injuries associated with the April 5 incident; initial assessment of damage is vegetation in a one-acre area," Williams spokeswoman Helen Humphreys said Friday in a prepared statement.

ASSOCIATED PRESS (W. VA.)

DEP investigates Doddridge Co. tank rupture State regulators are investigating the rupture of two water tanks at an Antero Resources well pad in Doddridge County. The Department of Environmental Protection tells media outlets that its inspectors believe the rupture was caused by a buildup of pressure in the tanks. The rupture occurred Friday at Antero's Marsden well pad. No injuries were reported. Antero chief administration officer Alvyn Schopp tells The Exponent Telegram that the tanks are used to hold water that's separated from gas extracted at the drilling site. Schopp says the company plans to conduct its own investigation.

MARYLAND

BALTIMORE SUN

Bluebird trail at Pot Spring Elementary restored in time for fledgling season The bluebirds are coming back. At least, that's the hope at Pot Spring Elementary School. The bluebird trail has

been restored in time for the spring fledgling season, when eggs are laid and bluebird chicks hatch. The restoration comes thanks to Maureen Larkin, a teacher and naturalist at Baltimore County's Cromwell Valley Park. Larkin's children attended Pot Spring, a pre-kindergarten through fifth grade Baltimore County public school at 2410 Springlake Drive. She lives near the school. Last year, Larkin said, "I was walking the school grounds and I noticed the bluebird trail boxes on the ground. I wondered what was going on." If anyone knows about bluebirds, it's Larkin. She oversees Cromwell Valley Park's bluebird trail, which has been actively maintained and monitored for 15 years. With 25 bluebird boxes and a group of volunteers, she watches for nesting activity, sending the count to the [Cornell University](#) Lab of Ornithology, in Ithaca, N.Y.

Bird lovers squawk over Sunday hunting Arguing their safe access to public lands is threatened, birders are making a last-ditch appeal to Gov. Martin O'Malley to veto legislation that would expand hunting on Sundays in western Maryland. The Maryland Ornithological Society joined horse lovers in opposing two bills that would authorize hunting deer and other game on private and public lands in Garrett, Allegany, Washington and Frederick counties. The General Assembly overwhelmingly passed both measures, sponsored by western Maryland lawmakers, on the final day of the legislative session April 7. The Maryland Horse Council, representing horseback riders, had testified against the bills during the 90-day legislative session. But Kurt Schwarz, the ornithological society's conservation chair, said birders were "blind-sided" by their passage, after successfully opposing a similar bill for Anne Arundel County. Another measure that would have expanded Sunday hunting statewide also failed.

ANNAPOLIS CAPITAL -GAZETTE

Strong bay harvest brought few undersize oyster violations The number of oystermen cited or given warnings for having undersized oysters was at a five-year low this season, which some Maryland Department of Natural Resources officials said is the result of a particularly strong harvest. There were so many full-size oysters in the Chesapeake Bay this year because 2010 was an exceptional reproductive year and there has been low disease mortality since then, said Michael Naylor, the shellfish program director at the Department of Natural Resources. "Now they're reaching market size in great numbers," he said. When the oyster population is high, fewer oystermen feel the need to harvest them when they're still undersized, said Candy Thomson, a Maryland Natural Resources Police spokeswoman. Naylor said the 2012-2013 harvest was about 340,000 oyster bushels and while this season's numbers have not been fully tallied, officials expect the number to be significantly higher. Maryland oyster season runs from Oct. 1 to March 31. About 10 years ago, the harvest brought only 26,000 bushels of oysters across the bay. Maryland's Natural Resources Police considers any oyster under three inches to be undersized, and allows 5 percent of the oysters in a bushel to be undersized as a leeway to oystermen. "If you're really paying attention to what you're doing, you might have one or two (undersized oysters)," said Jim Mullin, executive director of the Maryland Oyster Association. During the 2013-14 harvest season, 30 citations were given out for possession of undersized oysters, according to data from the NRP.

CARROLL COUNTY TIMES

Some Carroll municipal leaders give authority to mayors to sign stormwater funding agreement What's going to happen at an April 17 meeting between the county commissioners and municipal leaders? That depends on who you ask. Some municipal leaders believe that a

memorandum of understanding, also called an MOU, that would lead to them paying less for state-mandated stormwater projects will be signed by the county's eight mayors and the five members of the Carroll County Board of Commissioners; a high-level county staff member said that was the intention of the meeting as well.

CUMBERLAND TIMES-NEWS

Appalachian Lab scientists split university system's highest award FROSTBURG — The University System of Maryland Board of Regents has selected two faculty members from the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science — Keith Eshleman and Andrew Elmore- — to receive the 2014 USM Regents' Faculty Award, the highest honor that the board bestows to recognize exemplary faculty achievement. It's the first time that two of the center's faculty members have been honored in the same year. "Andrew Elmore is an innovative scientist whose research impact extends well beyond the boundaries of his disciplines, and Keith Eshleman's accomplishments in public service have been extraordinary without question," said Dr. Donald Boesch, president of the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science. "The fact that two members of our small faculty were selected from the more than 8,000 full-time faculty members in the university system is truly remarkable. That they both hail from our Appalachian Laboratory in Frostburg shows that there is clearly something exceptional going on at our lab in the mountains."

EASTON STAR DEMOCRAT

State says county misinterpreted federal law CHESTERTOWN — According to four cabinet-level officials, the state has done a great job of coordinating with the county government on issues such as Chesapeake Bay cleanup, fisheries management and agricultural regulations, and the county's efforts to apply the National Environmental Policy Act are "based on misinterpretation and misapplication." A letter to Kent County Administrator Ernie Crofoot arrived March 20 from Maryland secretaries Joseph Gill (natural resources), Richard E. Hall (planning), Earl "Buddy" Hance (agriculture) and Robert Summers (environment) in response to the county's efforts to get more involved with policy matters at the state level. Crofoot issued his letter to the state, at the county commissioners' request, Jan. 10. It included a resolution issued by the commissioners staking the "authority to engage federal and state agencies in the coordination process established and mandated by federal and state statutes" under the NEPA. "NEPA imposes no obligation on the lead federal agency or the coordinating state agency to coordinate with local jurisdictions. Consequently, neither the State nor its undersigned agencies has any legal obligation to coordinate with Kent County in the manner suggested by the Resolution," the letter signed by the four secretaries states. Ron Fithian, president of the Kent County Commissioners, expected such a response. "We envisioned that type of response when we first set out there. We'll see how it plays out," Fithian said Monday, March 31. He said state officials seem to think that by meeting with their counterparts in the county and telling them what is going to be done — as opposed to asking for input on plans — constitutes coordination. He said the state tells the county how it is "going to be." "We see it differently than that and we'll be preparing a response to the letter we received from them," Fithian said. Earlier this year, Crofoot said the idea behind the county's letter to the state came out of a discussion with members of the Clean Chesapeake Coalition, of which Fithian is chairman. The hope was that by applying the NEPA to a federally mandated Chesapeake Bay cleanup program, the state would have to look at ensuring industries such as seafood and agriculture are not shut down due to

regulations. Crofoot said according to the NEPA, the Bay pollution diet program requires officials to take into account the social and economic development environments, as well as the physical environment. "There are seven or eight factors, in which the physical environment is only, you know, one or two pieces," Crofoot said.

Cambridge moves toward purchase property for green space CAMBRIDGE — The greening of Maryland Avenue should be starting within the next few months, and there is progress toward purchasing vacant properties on the corner of Maryland Avenue and U.S. Route 50 to make this gateway entrance even greener. Monday, the Cambridge City Council agreed by 4-1 vote, with Councilman Frank Cooke casting the sole opposing vote, to create a memorandum of understanding for a Strategic Demolition and Smart Growth Impact Fund grant for \$750,000 from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development to go to Sailwinds Park Inc., for the purchase of three properties — at 101, 103 and 105 Sunburst Highway. Those properties are the old Burger King building, its parking lot and an adjacent vacant service station.

Letter: Democrats do it again Since the Democratic party is bereft of good issues on which to run in the November election, they're running against the Koch Brothers. Recently one of their local scribes, Mike Brown, following his party's talking points, proceeded to demonize Charles and David Koch for legally participating in the political process with their money as does, incidentally, the Democratic party doyen George Soros. Brown also took a couple of hits against Rep. Andy Harris for doing what he said he would do, and that's cut the budget. For the record, Koch companies employ 60,000 Americans and 140,000 additional American jobs that generate \$11.7 billion in compensation and benefits. Yes indeed, the Koch's own refineries, which provide gasoline that power our cars and heat our homes. These refineries have been commended by EPA for their "commitment to a cleaner environment" and as a "model" for other companies. It should also be noted that David Koch supports the PBS network through his generous contribution to the NOVA science series.

FREDERICK NEWS-POST

Ag department wants more farmers to use manure as fertilizer The Maryland Department of Agriculture wants to see more farmers recycle manure instead of buy commercial fertilizer products, and the agency has launched a manure resource page to encourage using the natural plant food. Local farmers have welcomed the new resource the MDA refers to as "Manure Happens." Farmers have been using manure for years, Tuscarora dairy farmer Chuck Fry said. "The MDA is trying to heighten awareness for the general public; it's an effort to say it's normal to see manure being applied in the fields," said Fry, who also is Maryland Farm Bureau president. "I think it's a good move, but there will always be naysayers," Fry said. The local agriculture community has often been criticized by new residents to Frederick County who are offended by the smell of manure. Farmers have countered, saying new residents should realize agriculture is a major part of the county's economy, including being the state's largest milk producer. It's springtime, Fry said, and as farmers clean out their barns, people see piles of manure, especially on the Eastern Shore, and they wonder what's happening. "This is nothing new, it happens all the time," Fry said. "A 1,500-pound cow produces 150 pounds of manure a year." Adamstown organic farmer Brian Biggins welcomes the MDA's efforts. Manure Happens makes sense, he said. "We have a few resources; we can't remake the Chesapeake Bay, but we

can rejuvenate it,” Biggins said, adding that one way to do that is to use manure for fertilizer. Many people don’t realize that even tiny streams eventually dump into the Chesapeake Bay, he said. People need to make sure they’re not adding to the Bay’s phosphate levels, which takes oxygen out of the water. Fish, oyster and shrimp need oxygen. But farmers can only use manure in certain amounts that are established by Maryland’s nutrient management program, Biggins said. Farmers must determine how much phosphorous and micronutrients are in the soil to determine how manure can be applied to the ground, the farmer said, adding that each crop requires a different amount of manure.

MARYLAND GAZETTE NEWSPAPERS

Glenn Dale group brings farm to Bowie students (Friday) Digging through dirt and hanging out with goats were on Bowie-based Yorktown Elementary’s curriculum on Thursday as the students participated in an in-school field trip hosted by a Glenn Dale education group. “The only animal I’ve ever seen on school grounds is my dog,” said 10-year-old Daniel Turner, of Bowie. “It was cool.” The goats and dirt were part of Edie’s Place’s in-school field trip, Edie’s place is a Glenn Dale-based education group that operates a suburban farm and brings animals and other farming experiences to schools. The organization also invites students and other interested parties to their farms so children can learn about agriculture, said Danielle Oluokun, Edie’s Place owner. This is the second year that Edie’s Place has visited schools to help them save transportation costs, Oluokun said. The organization started operations in 2010, she said. “It helps (students) to understand where food comes from,” Oluokun said. “We bring the farm to them, which makes it easier for all the students to participate.” _

CHESAPEAKE BAY JOURNAL

Virginia attorney general backs EPA in Bay cleanup Virginia has become the first state to side with the Environmental Protection Agency in the ongoing legal challenge of the agency’s authority to establish the Bay cleanup plan. Virginia Attorney General Mark Herring on Feb. 9 filed a friend of the court brief saying that the agency had merely “done what Congress directed” when it established the Total Maximum Daily Load, or pollution diet, for the Bay in December 2010. The cleanup plan, which set enforceable limits on the amount of nutrient and sediment pollution that can enter the Bay, was unsuccessfully challenged in a federal court by farm groups and homebuilders, but those groups have taken the case to the 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Philadelphia. Earlier this year, they were joined by a group of 21 attorneys general from around the nation who filed a friend of the court brief arguing that the EPA had usurped authority that belonged to the states in establishing the plan. They expressed concern that the Bay TMDL would set a precedent for other waterbodies, including the Mississippi River Basin. The Virginia brief disputed those arguments. It said the pollution reduction actions required under the TMDL were “based almost entirely on the Bay States’ own plans.” The brief argued that it was premature to argue that the EPA infringed on state authority because no disputes currently existed between the states and the agency over implementation of the cleanup plan. “If the EPA ever infringes upon state authority, Virginia or another proper plaintiff can challenge its action at that time,” the brief said, noting that the Commonwealth was “no shrinking violet” when it came to taking on EPA authority, citing a recent suit against the agency involving a TMDL for a Fairfax County creek. The brief also disputed a claim that the Bay states were “coerced” into accepting the TMDL, saying it “arose through cooperative dialogue between the Bay States and EPA, not through some unilateral federal imposition.”

With river in his blood, Fred Tutman stands his ground wholeheartedly Fred Tutman's office's backyard features a postcard-perfect view of his beloved Patuxent River. Clumps of brown spatterdock are turning tan, creating a lovely marshy look as the late afternoon sun dips. Boats glide through the channel, their captains waving as they pass. The first osprey of the year surges past the purple martin birdhouses on its dive for a fish. But the longtime Patuxent Riverkeeper looks deeper and sees something disturbing: a continued assault on Maryland's longest river — a waterbody that can't speak for itself — from development and industry, as well as a history of injustices in which the wealthiest communities receive the best environmental protection.

ASSOCIATED PRESS (MD)

Md. ponders disclosure of gas-drilling chemicals OAKLAND, Md. (AP) — An advisory panel is considering a state proposal that would require companies to publicly disclose the chemicals used for hydraulic fracturing for natural gas. The proposal is up for discussion at Monday's meeting in Oakland of the Marcellus Shale Advisory Commission. The panel is developing recommendations for state regulation of natural gas drilling in western Maryland.

VIRGINIA

ROANOKE TIMES

Coal ash storage a New River worry GLEN LYN — The old Appalachian Power Co. plant here sits above the New River — and above coal ash storage ponds, the type of facility that earlier this year fouled miles of the Dan River. About 10 miles upstream, another ash pond sits along the New River at the Celanese plant near Narrows. Between them is a virtual coal ash landfill — 100,000 cubic yards of coal ash used to underpin an empty private industrial park on U.S. 460. To a citizens group that spent years battling the Cumberland Park industrial site, the concentration of coal ash in Giles County is troubling. But state and county officials, and managers at Appalachian and Celanese, said they are confident the ash storage sites along the New River are properly safeguarded. Each facility, they say, has significant differences from the Duke Energy ash pond that collapsed Feb. 2 in Eden, N.C., creating a 70-mile plume of ash that flowed past Danville. The spill drew new attention to the arsenic, mercury, lead and other toxins contained in coal ash. "It's always a concern when you have waste next to the river, obviously," Giles County Administrator Chris McKlarney said last week. "But we've never had an issue that I'm aware of." Vernon Kelley of the Concerned Citizens of Giles County countered that his group is collecting water samples and consulting with attorneys about the results they are gathering. "It's not safe," he said of the riverside location of the ash sites. "It's not conducive to good management of the environment."

Pigg River OKd after 30,000-gallon manure spill ROCKY MOUNT --The Pigg River in Franklin County has received a clean bill of health following a spill of 30,000 gallons of cow manure. A holding lagoon near the intersection of Calico Rock Road and 6 Mile Post west of Rocky Mount spilled last week. The Franklin County Health Department consulted with officials from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality in Roanoke and made a joint decision to remove signs advising people to avoid using the Pigg River, according to a news release from the

health department. "Affected sections of the Pigg River have returned to normal, pre-event conditions," the release said. "No other effects have been observed, therefore normal recreational activities can resume." CHARLOTTESVILLE DAILY PROGRESS

FREDERICKSBURG FREELANCE STAR

Stafford supervisors seek input on taxes The Stafford County Board of Supervisors holds public hearings Tuesday for the proposed real estate tax rate and creation of a countywide stormwater district. Tacked on to the proposed stormwater district is a half-cent tax that would go toward cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay. Stafford and Fredericksburg are among 91 counties and cities in Virginia that operate municipal separate storm sewer systems, known as MS4s. Discharges from those are regulated by the Virginia Stormwater Management Act and the federal Clean Water Act. After the stormwater tax is collected, it will go toward operations, public outreach, construction of new facilities and the rehabilitation of streams, said Stafford Public Works Director Michael Smith. Rock Hill District Supervisor Cord Sterling opposes designating a separate taxing district for stormwater management. "When you put something in its own district, people spend what they say they are going to spend and don't take a hard look at what is being spent," Sterling said. But Board Chairman Jack Cavalier wanted to separate the tax out to show it is a state mandate the county must comply with, and a majority of the board supported him. The mandate starts this year and is projected to cost the county \$42 million over the next 15 years.

ASSOCIATED PRESS (VA.)

Va. stands with Chesapeake Bay restoration plan RICHMOND — Virginia is defending the multistate plan to restore the environmentally battered Chesapeake Bay, arguing in a court filing that the state's interest in the nation's largest estuary is "incalculably great." Attorney General Mark R. Herring announced Thursday that the state has filed a friend-of-the court brief in support of the plan, which aims to restore the bay after decades of neglect and broken promises. The filing is in the 3rd U.S. Circuit of Appeals in Philadelphia, which is considering an appeal by farm industry groups of a ruling upholding the plan. They have been joined by attorneys general from 21 states in a suit that questions the Environmental Protection Agency's authority to implement the plan. American Farm Bureau President Bob Stallman has called the pollution limits "a remarkable power grab" by the EPA. Dismissing that claim, Herring cited the bay's economic and environmental importance in defense of the plan. "When the most promising plan to protect and restore the bay comes under attack, I am going to stand up for the health of Virginia families, for Virginia's economic interests, for Virginia's efforts to restore the Chesapeake Bay," Herring said in prepared remarks at a news conference at Fort Monroe, a historic former Army base at the southern end of the bay. The EPA is leading the six-state effort to restore the bay by 2025. The multibillion-dollar effort comprises Virginia, Maryland, West Virginia, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New York and the District of Columbia. The federal government took the lead on the cleanup after the states within the bay's vast watershed failed to act on promises to restore the bay. Seventeen million people live within the watershed. Pollution in the bay has created "dead zones" where nothing lives and has taken a toll on marine life such as the bay's signature blue crab.

MISCELLANEOUS

BNA DAILY ENVIRONMENT REPORT

EPA Wants Assurance on Best Management Practices for Chesapeake Bay Best management practices that capture nutrient and sediment pollution from farm fields and city streets before it enters streams and rivers are welcomed by the Environmental Protection Agency, but the agency wants to go one step further in the effort to restore the Chesapeake Bay. The agency wants assurance that in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, best management practices, such as use of pervious concrete parking lots and fences that keep cattle 100 feet away from streams and rivers, are maintained for many years. Long-term assurance of BMP effectiveness is essential to state compliance with the federal government's Chesapeake Bay restoration program, Jeff Corbin, the agency's special adviser on the bay, suggested April 9. States can earn pollution reduction credits for installed EPA-certified BMPs. "The big issue is how you provide assurance that BMPs continue to function well after installation," Corbin told BBNA at the 25th annual Virginia Environmental Symposium at the Virginia Military Institute. "How often are the inspections done and who does the inspections?" are the questions now being hashed out by the agency, the six states sharing the bay watershed, farmer groups and environmental groups, Corbin said. The EPA's push for long-term assurance of BMP effectiveness comes as it reviews the states' draft biennial milestone plans. Filed March 15, the states' milestone plans say what restoration policies and practices will be implemented over the next two years. The six states—Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia—are subject to a mandatory pollution reduction program designed to restore the bay, with all necessary policies and practices in place by 2025. "This one should scare us all," Russ Baxter, Virginia's deputy secretary for natural resources, half-joked when speaking about the agency's new demand. "Is that BMP put in five years [ago] still there? For agriculture and municipal governments, this is potentially a big deal."

Vitter Presses McCabe for More Details on Social Cost of Carbon Figure April 11 — Sen. David Vitter (R-La.) pressed the Environmental Protection Agency's top air pollution official to explain what role, if any, she may have played in setting a new figure on the social cost of carbon. Vitter, ranking Republican on the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, asked Janet McCabe in an April 11 [letter](#) whether she participated in an interagency working group that updated the social cost of carbon number and whether she would provide the committee with the names and titles of agency officials who may have participated in the process. McCabe is the EPA's acting assistant administrator for air and radiation and President Barack Obama's nominee to fill that position permanently. "As we discussed then, I have been involved in a continued effort to bring transparency to the process surrounding the development of the social cost of carbon estimates (SCC), a process which, in fact, seems to be very closed," Vitter said in the letter. "I have mentioned before the importance of understanding how these estimates were created, since they have been used in 28 EPA rules thus far. They are of great significance not only because they are used frequently to justify costly and controversial regulations, but also because the specific participants with any level of involvement in the process behind developing the estimates have been kept completely anonymous." The EPA said it is reviewing the letter. The social cost of carbon is used to calculate impacts such as the net effects on damaged property, agriculture and human health from extreme weather linked to climate change for each

metric ton of carbon dioxide emissions. In November 2013, federal agencies set the social cost of carbon at \$37 per metric ton in 2007 dollars for 2015. That is up from the \$24 per metric ton figure established in 2010. The White House said the increase was the result of better data input into the models.

Industry Group Asks Supreme Court to Review EPA's 2008 Ozone Standard A power industry advocacy group is asking the U.S. Supreme Court to review how the EPA set the 2008 ozone air quality standard. The Utility Air Regulatory Group says that the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, which upheld the EPA's national ambient air quality standard for ozone in July 2013, disregarded the Supreme Court's direction to set air quality standards at levels that are neither lower nor higher than necessary to protect the public health.

Whitfield: EPA's Power Plant Rules Top Target if Republicans Take Senate A House-passed bill to curtail the EPA's authority to regulate greenhouse gas emissions from power plants "is a top priority" for Republicans if they gain control of the Senate in the fall elections, a House Republican says. "We think our chances are good for taking over the Senate," Rep. Whitfield, who chairs the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Power, tells Bloomberg BNA in an on-camera interview.

Court Denies Challenge to EPA Rule That Retained Carbon Monoxide Limit The EPA acted reasonably in retaining primary, health-based national ambient air quality standards for carbon monoxide that were first set in 1971, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit rules. The court also finds that Communities for a Better Environment and WildEarth Guardians lack standing to challenge the EPA's decision not to issue a secondary public welfare standard for carbon monoxide, saying the groups failed to show that emissions at the level allowed by the EPA would be worse for global warming than under a secondary standard.

GREENWIRE

Va. urges appeals court to uphold EPA cleanup plan (Friday) The state of Virginia is asking a federal appeals court to uphold U.S. EPA's landmark Chesapeake Bay cleanup plan against a challenge brought by major agriculture and homebuilding groups. "When the most promising plan to protect and restore the Bay comes under attack, I am going to stand up for the health of Virginia's families, for Virginia's economic interests, for Virginia's efforts to restore the Chesapeake Bay," Virginia Attorney General Mark Herring (D) said in a press release announcing the filing of a friend-of-the-court brief yesterday. Herring's move is largely aimed at countering a brief filed by 21 attorneys general in February in support of the industry challenge. Those states, all but one of which are outside the Chesapeake Bay watershed, argued that the plan was a federal takeover of states' rights and that the effort could have "profound consequences for every state"

Vitter demands answers from McCabe on social cost of carbon Sen. David Vitter (R-La.) today quizzed President Obama's pick for U.S. EPA air chief on her contribution to the administration's revision last year of its estimate for the social cost of carbon. Vitter asked acting Assistant Administrator for Air and Radiation Janet McCabe in a letter for details about the working

group's methods for arriving at the new estimate that carbon dioxide costs society \$37 per ton emitted -- a figure that has already appeared in the cost-benefit analyses for several EPA rulemakings. Critics, including Vitter, who serves as top Republican on the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, have said that the interagency working group process that led to the SCC revision last May, was shrouded in mystery. The group increased its estimate for the economic and health costs of CO2 from a \$24 to \$37 in 2015. The administration has named the 12 agencies that were represented on the panel, and it used publicly available models. But critics have demanded the names and titles of all involved in the process, a request Vitter reiterated in today's letter. And he asked McCabe whether she participated in the deliberations and whether she signed off on the result.

Senate GOP launches pre-emptive strike on livestock emissions Senate Republicans last night launched a pre-emptive strike against any plans to regulate methane emissions from livestock -- despite assurances from the Obama administration that it does not plan to do so. Sens. John Thune (S.D.), Mike Johanns (Neb.) and 14 of their GOP colleagues released a letter to the heads of U.S. EPA and the Energy and Agriculture departments, asking them to "stop pursuing regulations on livestock emissions." The letter stated that the agencies are mulling rules that would cost medium-sized dairy farms up to \$22,000 and medium-sized cattle farms up to \$27,000 annually. "Federal regulations of [greenhouse gases] in the agriculture sector would have detrimental implications on livestock operations across the country," the letter says.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ohio regulators halt fracking site, drawing link to quakes State geologists in Ohio have for the first time linked earthquakes in a geologic formation deep under the Appalachians to gas drilling, leading the state to issue new permit conditions in certain areas that are among the nation's strictest. A state investigation of five small tremors in the Youngstown area, in the Appalachian foothills, last month has found the high-pressure injection of sand and water that accompanies hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, in the Utica Shale may have increased pressure on a small, unknown fault, said State Oil & Gas Chief Rick Simmers. He called the link "probable." While earlier studies had linked earthquakes in the same region to deep-injection wells used for disposal of fracking wastewater, this marks the first time tremors have been tied directly to fracking, Simmers said. Five seismic events in March were all part of what was considered a single event and couldn't be easily felt by people. The state's new permit conditions are perhaps the most cautious yet put in place in the nation, he said. Glenda Besana-Ostman, a seismologist with the U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Reclamation, confirmed the finding is the first in the region to suggest a connection between the quakes and the actual extraction of oil and gas, as opposed to wastewater disposal. A deep-injection well in the same region of Ohio was found to be the likely cause of a series of quakes in the same region of Ohio in 2012. Under the new permit conditions, all new drilling sites in Ohio within 3 miles of a known fault or seismic activity of 2.0 magnitude or higher will be conditioned on the installation of sensitive seismic-monitoring equipment. Results will be directly available to regulators, Simmers said, so the state isn't reliant on drilling operators providing the data voluntarily.

MINTPRESS

Lawmakers Urge EPA To Assist Polluted Fracking Communities Members of Congress urge the EPA to take another look at reports of groundwater pollution allegedly caused by fracking and to

help those affected by the pollution. WASHINGTON — Members of the U.S. Congress are formally calling on the Environmental Protection Agency to re-examine reports of groundwater pollution in three states — allegedly, the result of natural gas drilling — and to help affected communities. EPA investigators have looked into the complaints in Pennsylvania, Texas and Wyoming in recent years. Each of those probes was mysteriously cut short, with the agency failing to take substantive action. Affected landowners and environmental watchdogs have since suggested that the decisions were politically motivated, with directions potentially coming from the White House... In 2012, the EPA agreed to investigate reports of contaminated drinking water on behalf of about a dozen and a half Dimock families living near Cabot Oil and Gas gas drilling sites. The agency appears to have abruptly halted that investigation just months later, and in July of that year, it told residents that their water was safe. “The sampling and an evaluation of the particular circumstances at each home did not indicate levels of contaminants that would give EPA reason to take further action,” EPA Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin said at the time. “Throughout EPA’s work in Dimock, the Agency has used the best available scientific data to provide clarity to Dimock residents and address their concerns about the safety of their drinking water.” Last year, a document leaked by an EPA whistleblower appeared to suggest otherwise. According to media accounts, the internal report warned that fracking-related activities were causing “significant” damage to local aquifers around Dimock, particularly due to methane seepage.